

The intent of the *Guidelines* is to promote:

- Integrated, statewide, multimodal, regional transportation planning and set forth a uniform regional transportation planning framework throughout California;
- Transportation planning that facilitates decision-making;
- Continuing, comprehensive, and coordinated transportation planning that facilitates the rapid and efficient development and implementation of projects while maintaining California's commitment to public health and environmental quality; and
- Planning which integrates the public into decision-making.

Key Review Points

The *RTP Guidelines* include a comprehensive RTP checklist that MPO/RTPA should complete and District staff should use to review the RTP for completeness. The following are topical key points derived from the Guidelines with some additional clarification:

Regional Plan Components, Public Involvement, Consultation

- Contains both short term (10-yr.) and long-term (20-yr.) horizons.
- Includes the three required elements, action, policy and financial.
- Sets forth outcome performance measures.
- Considers strategies to meet the seven broad planning factors in TEA-21.
- Complies with Title VI, Environmental Justice, and ADA. (Title VI addresses fundamental principles of equal access to transportation benefits of protected population groups such as low income, minority, elderly and the disabled. New data collection requirements expected – demographic profiles that identify protected populations, transportation services for protected populations and any disproportionate environmental, social or economic impacts on these populations).
- Assesses current modes of transportation and the potential for new travel options.
- Predicts future needs for travel and goods movement.
- Includes actions to address mobility and accessibility needs.
- References and documents public policy decisions by local, regional, state, and federal officials regarding transportation expenditures and financing.
- Identifies needed transportation improvements in sufficient detail to:
 - Develop the Federal Transportation Improvement Program (FTIP), the Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) and the Interregional Transportation Improvement Program (ITIP).
 - Facilitate National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA)/404 integration decisions.
 - Identify project purpose and needs.
 - Develop an estimate of emissions impacts for demonstrating conformity with the air quality standards identified in the SIP (non-attainment areas only).
- Promote consistency among the California Transportation Plan, the RTP and other transportation plans developed by cities, counties, districts, private organizations, Tribal governments, and state and federal agencies in responding to statewide and interregional transportation issues and needs.
- Provide a forum for (1) participation and cooperation and (2) partnerships that reconcile transportation issues, which transcend regional boundaries.
- Involve the public, federal, State and local agencies, as well as local elected officials, early in the transportation planning process. Include them in: discussions, identification of key concerns

early by use of environmental inventories and analyses identified at the plan stage and decisions on the social, economic, air quality and environmental issues related to transportation.

- Environmental resource and permit agencies are to be involved in RTP development as appropriate. Their involvement is documented.
- Where planning areas include Federal Lands or Native American Tribal Lands, Federal land managing agencies and Tribal Governments are to be consulted in the Plan development.

Environmental Considerations

- Evidences compliance with CEQA.
- The RTP should reflect sensitivity with consideration of the environment to minimize adverse impacts. Environmental considerations include wetlands protection, endangered species, cumulative impacts, historical bridges or buildings, etc.
- The RTP should have a Statement of Purpose and Need for transportation investments. (The purpose and needs statement identifies the problem to be solved and is derived from the Goals, Policies and Objectives statements in the Policy Element. Examples of problems include mobility, congestion, safety, maintaining the existing system, etc.)
- Appropriate Environmental Document (ED)
 - If projects collectively have a significant effect on the environment, the appropriate plan level document is either a Program EIR or Master EIR. Benefits: These EDs better evaluate cumulative or growth inducing impact and streamline later project significant environmental analysis to form basis for subsequent decision making
 - If significant impacts can be mitigated below level of Significance – Mitigated Negative Declaration.
 - If no significant effects are identified for plan projects – Negative Declaration
 - If consistent with classes of projects on CEQA Guidelines Section 15300 – Categorical Exemption
- Although an environmental review under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) is not required, MPOs/RTPAs may elect to advance the preliminary identification of key issues and environmental constraints as well as some level of cumulative impact analysis to the planning stage, which is the most meaningful time to address regional cumulative impacts. Early identification of environmental issues and constraints allows for plan modifications and provides better impact avoidance opportunity. This may mean beginning the NEPA process at the RTP stage rather than at the project stage.
 - For NEPA the evaluation of alternatives should be identified and studied.
 - Under NEPA there should be an identification of inventories and analysis of economic, social and environmental conditions and consequences.

Air Quality Considerations

- For non-attainment and maintenance areas, the RTP reflects conformity with the SIP.
- The RTP, for non-attainment and maintenance areas, reflect coordination with the State Air Resources Board.
- The RTP, for non-attainment and maintenance areas, discusses how the plan conforms to the SIP.
- The RTP includes Transportation Control Measures as appropriate.
- The RTP has enough specificity to make a conformity determination.
- The air quality conformity findings are provided FHWA/FTA. FHWA/FTA must approve the air quality conformity of the RTP before it is deemed a conforming RTP.
- For air quality non-attainment areas, only projects in a conforming RTP and a conforming transportation improvement program (TIP) are eligible for federal transportation funding.

